

To: Hyde, Tinka[hyde.tinka@epa.gov]
From: Stoner, Nancy
Sent: Fri 2/1/2013 1:40:15 AM
Subject: Fw: EPA does job

All's well that ends well

Nancy K. Stoner

----- Original Message -----

From: Susan Hedman
Sent: 01/31/2013 07:32 PM CST
To: Bob Perciasepe; Nancy Stoner
Subject: EPA does job

I think you might enjoy this letter to the editor, which appeared in today's Marquette Mining Journal. The person writing the letter is very supportive of our role in the review of the County Road 595 project -- but the best part is the headline added by the newspaper, which is just about the nicest thing the Mining Journal has had to say about EPA in a long time. Thanks again for taking the time to help us resolve the issues with this project.

EPA does job

January 31, 2013

The Mining Journal

To the Journal editor:

The Mining Journal headline on Jan. 5 ("Road decision polarizing") left me shaking my head, but not surprised. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's decision not to issue a permit based upon the EPA's objections to County Road 595 was not polarizing.

The Marquette County Board's decision to pressure the Marquette County Road Commission to submit what many consider a fraudulent permit for the construction of a "county road" is what has been polarizing.

The polarization could be seen at the two public hearings held on this permit. At both the DEQ hearings in Ishpeming Township and at the EPA hearings held in Marquette, there was a polarizing divide between the elected and appointed officials and the public. Almost all public servants were in favor of the road, while public comment submitted by citizens was against construction at a ratio of close to 2:1.

The ratio at the EPA hearings would have been more pronounced, but many citizens left realizing they would not get to speak. The politicians, going first, took up one hour and ten minutes of the allotted 3 hour time.

This proposed road, like the "Woodland Road" before it, was a pretense for a Kennecott Haul Road as it is frequently referred to in public. The Board and Road Commission should have opposed the transportation plan in the original permit.

The politicians should have raised their voices when Kennecott quietly had the DEQ amend the original permit from "a railhead north of Marquette" to the current Wright Street route. The board and commission were given close to 1,000 signatures from citizens opposing that route which they ignored - until 6 years too late. They then tried to use it to bolster their argument for 595.

There were many well founded objections to this permit. Other federal agencies accurately objected that this was a haul road for Kennecott/Rio Tinto and not a county road. There were better alternative routes identified that would have met with less EPA objection, but Rio Tinto let it be known that if it did not get its way they were going to "take their football and go home".

Do not blame the EPA for doing their job. The EPA has restored my confidence that some of our public bodies do not bow to political and special interest pressure. The blame for any polarization should sit squarely with the Marquette County Board and the Marquette County Road Commission.

Gene Champagne

Big Bay

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